

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 201752

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ORIGIN AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CAB-09 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-11

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EB/PA/AVP:CHDUDLEY (DRAFT)

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R 112020Z OCT 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY GABORONE

INFO AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRN, BC, WZ, ZA, CG

SUBJECT: ALASKA INTERNATIONAL AIR INCREASES SOUTHERN AFRICA
ACTIVITIES

1. ALASKA INTERNATIONAL AIR (AIA) PRESIDENT NEIL
BERGT INFORMED DEPT. SEPTEMBER 28 OF AIA'S INCREASED
ACTIVITIES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND FUTURE PLANS.

2. AIA HAS MADE DECISION TO INCORPORATE IN BOTSWANA,
WHICH, BERGT SAYS, IMPLIES "LONG RANGE AIA COMMITMENT TO
BOTSWANA." NEW COMPANY, AFRICA INTERNATIONAL AIR, WILL
HANDLE AIRLINE'S ACTIVITIES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, INCREASE
LOCAL HIRE EMPLOYEES, AND ESTABLISH TRAINING PROGRAM FOR
CLERICAL AND TECHNICAL PERSONNEL IN BOTSWANA. AIA WILL
RETAIN MAJORITY CONTROL OF NEW COMPANY; FREIGHT SERVICES,
LTD. (ANGLO-AMERICAN) WILL HAVE 10 PER CENT AND BERGT

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PAGE 02 STATE 201752

SAYS NEGOTIATIONS ARE UNDERWAY WITH BOTSWANA DEVELOPMENT

CORP. TO TAKE 20-30 PER CENT OF EQUITY.

3. AIA IS PRESENTLY FLYING SOME 50 TONS PER DAY OF BEEF FROM BOTSWANA TO ZAMBIA AND IS EXPLORING POSSIBILITIES OF FLYING BEEF TO EUROPE. AIA IS ALSO ATTEMPTING TO CLEAR OVERFLIGHT RIGHTS WITH SOUTH AFRICA TO ENABLE IT TO FLY MEAT FROM SWAZILAND TO ZAIRE.

4. BERGT SEES FURTHER AIA EXPANSION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, ALTHOUGH COMPANY CONTINUES TO SHY AWAY FROM BLS REGIONAL AIRLINE. BERGT INDICATED INCORPORATION IN BOTSWANA IN PART DESIGNED EVENTUALLY TO ATTEMPT TO QUALIFY FOR EXIMBANK SUPPORT FOR PURCHASE OF AIRCRAFT. HE SAYS ONLY LIMITATION ON PRESENT PLANS FOR EXPANSION IN BOTSWANA IS LENGTH OF GABORONE RUNWAY (5,000 FEET) WHICH HE WOULD LIKE TO SEE EXTENDED TO 12,000 FEET TO TAKE HEAVIER LOADS AND LARGER AIRCRAFT. KISSINGER

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